

# The Hammer Times

Operation Enduring Freedom 07-09



## Message from the Battalion Commander

Construction season is in full swing with each of the construction line companies expanding operating bases across Regional Command-East and Regional Command-South. Bravo Company is in their final stages of completing COP Terminator and FOB Maywand vicinity of Kandahar in RC-South. B/62<sup>nd</sup> also continues to support 68<sup>th</sup> CSE with a vertical platoon for the construction of



**Gator Soldiers construct a guard tower at FOB Shank**

Guard Towers at FOB Wolverine in RC-South. Finally, B/62<sup>nd</sup> is in their final stage of redeployment preparation with their actual redeployment beginning next month. 68<sup>th</sup> CSE continues their enormous effort in the construction of FOB Wolverine. With less than 15 Soldiers remaining on FOB Orgun-E, 68<sup>th</sup> CSE has entirely moved into their Engineer Life Support Area at FOB Wolverine in order to rapidly construct an operating base that will eventually be home to maneuver, aviation, and support personnel. Unlike most operating bases, FOB Wolverine is a new operating base, thus 68<sup>th</sup> CSE has assumed many of the mayoral and security tasks which many of our companies have not had to do. Alpha Company is pushing ahead on their massive effort in expanding FOB Shank. Like FOB Wolverine, a majority of A/62<sup>nd</sup>'s work is concentrated on building force protection, life support areas, and aviation landing pads, to include taxiways. Both FOB Shank and FOB Wolverine require an enormous amount of horizontal effort with precise final grading. A/62<sup>nd</sup> also

continues their efforts on the vertical construction of COPS Deysie and Narizah next to the Pakistan border. SFC Baker's soldiers are truly making the difference in providing quality of life and force protection to the Soldiers of 4/101 BCT. C/62<sup>nd</sup> continues their support to TF DUKE (3-1 BCT) in locations such as COPs Penich, Monti, and Michigan where they are constructing B-Huts, guard towers, and HESCO perimeters. Let's not forget that C/62<sup>nd</sup> begins their redeploy 30-days after B/62<sup>nd</sup> departs. Finally, Headquarters and Support Company continues their efforts in support of each company regardless of the location or requirement. Headquarters and Support Company's Equipment Platoon is currently supporting A/62<sup>nd</sup> at FOB Shank. Soldiers from HSC are located in Sharana, Bagram, Kandahar, Shank, Wolverine, Orgun-E, and Fenty.



**Tower construction at COP Deysie**

As you can see, our Soldiers remain extremely busy across Afghanistan. Your Soldiers are motivated and making the difference. Their construction expertise is noticeable and appreciated by every task force we support. Our efforts are sustainable because of your support, which I truly appreciate.

## Message from the Battalion Command Sergeant Major

With winter slowly becoming a thing of the past, we transition into the spring construction season – although we really never slowed down even in the height of the winter season... We were lucky enough to escape a harsh Afghan winter and the temperatures are relatively nice this time of the year. The Soldiers continue to do great things across the battlefield, we have several high profile projects, and I am confident that the Soldiers will come through and provide a quality product to the customer. This is tough business and we do ask a lot of our Soldiers. They continue to produce results despite the difficult conditions associated with working and living in Afghanistan.

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As we wind down the deployment for B co and set the conditions for them to return to Ft Sill, Charlie Company is right behind them and then the remainder of the battalion. As I have stated in previous newsletters, we can't lose sight of the fact that we are still deployed and still have a mission to complete. Our mission will not be complete until we get everyone back home safely.

Thanks for your support!

March 15, 2008



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## Headquarters and Support Company "Pale Riders"

The HSC Paleriders are thrilled to be heading into the final phases of the deployment. Every time you read another one of these updates you are one month closer to seeing your loved one back home. Your Soldier is nearly 75% complete with their mission. Though it does continue to be difficult to be away from home, the Paleriders are poised and focused to finish the deployment with the same effort and motivation as it began.



**PSD Platoon emplaces a concrete pad**

Every platoon in the company persistently helps maintain and sustain the entire battalion in their respective support functions. The battalion operations section (S-3) remains the central hub for information on the entire battalion's daily missions. They work tirelessly seven days a week and 24 hours a day to ensure the battalion commander has all the necessary information to make timely decisions. In addition to setting and tracking the battalion's battle rhythm, the battalion operations section coordinates multiple battalion missions, troop movements and intelligence.

Both the organizational and direct support maintenance platoons have been working extremely hard on the company and the battalion's fleet respectively. The maintenance sections were instrumental in ensuring the success of the two major support movements. The HSC mechanics executed major repairs on 68th CSE fleet of haul assets in order to ensure 68th could move all of their construction equipment in preparation of a major FOB expansion. Two members of the maintenance section were recognized for their outstanding support to FOB Rushmore. SGT Souter and PFC Velazquez performed some very critical welding work to the force protection of the FOB.

One of the most promising signs of our pending return for to the United States is the ongoing preparations for our return in the late summer. The Paleriders are beginning the initial stages of planning for the extremely involved paperwork process. Some of your Soldiers have begun doing test loads for containers and completing some of the packing lists throughout the company.

Although all the Soldiers are looking forward to returning, they continue to be focused on the mission at hand. The company constantly strives to improve their working and living areas. Members from every section of the company have contributed to the improvement of the motor pool by emplacing concrete pads at the entrance of the company's maintenance bays.



**PFC Schreiber repairs a D7 Dozer**

As we round third base and head for the home stretch of our deployment know that your Soldier is strong and resolute in accomplishing every task at hand. We are all looking forward to returning to our loved ones. However, we are taking efforts every day to continue to make you proud.

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## Alpha Company “Gators”

A Company continues to work on a significant expansion of FOB Shank. Over the last month, we have been significantly challenged as weather slowed our operations. Snow, followed by rain, turned our construction site into soupy mud. Despite the difficult conditions, Gator Soldiers continued working to complete their construction missions.



**A Gator Dozer constructs the berm at FOB Shank**

The Earthmoving Platoon is engaged in constructing a large airfield, requiring a high degree of precision as they move thousands of tons of earth to create a flat area to support Army helicopter operations. In order to ensure on-time completion of their mission, the platoon has been conducting operations around the clock. They have been significantly aided by Soldiers from the Equipment Platoon, Headquarters Support Company, allowing both the day shift and the night shift to have a full complement of Soldiers operating every available piece of equipment. The dedication and hard work of your Soldiers have been recognized by senior Army leaders who recognize the importance of this construction mission.

2<sup>nd</sup> Platoon refused to let the poor weather stop their construction operations. When snow and rain prevented them from erecting their guard towers, they began assembly-line fabrication of roof trusses, girders, joists, footers, and walls for a headquarters building of approximately 7,200 square feet. As soon as they were able, they began constructing guard towers complete with air conditioners, insulation,

ballistic windows, lights, and a generator. They continue to set the standard for quality and speed in the construction of these guard towers. These positions will protect the Soldiers and equipment working on the FOB Shank expansion.

1<sup>st</sup> Platoon finally returned to A Company, after nearly 10 months detached to 68<sup>th</sup> CSE Company. They continue to work on combat outposts at Deysie and Narizah, improving living conditions for the infantrymen working out of these outposts. They also are constructing guard towers, installing plumbing and sewer systems for showers and toilets, and small dining facilities. Their work in these challenging locations is improving the morale and quality of life for Soldiers who will fight from these small combat outposts.

The maintenance platoon has been critical to all of the company operations. Their Soldiers are also working around the clock to support the earthmoving platoons as they push dirt through the night, and then continue to service and repair other equipment every day. Without their efforts in support of the rest of the company, we would never accomplish our construction missions.

The company has moved! This time, it was only from West Shank to East Shank, but the shift in operations has helped us to increase our daily efficiency in every operation. We now have a post office at FOB Shank, and here's our new address—

Soldier's Name  
A Company, 62<sup>nd</sup> Engineer Battalion  
FOB Shank, Afghanistan  
APO AE 09364

Thanks for all your support and prayers on behalf of your Soldiers.



**2nd Platoon pre-fabs SEAHUT trusses at FOB Shank**

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## Bravo Company "Battledawgs"

### Commander's Corner

With a little over a month left in our deployment the Battledawgs continue to do what we've done for over a year, make our mark all over Afghanistan. The Earthmoving platoon is still working on FOB Maywand, expanding it to an even larger capacity than what was originally planned. 2<sup>nd</sup> Platoon is finishing up on COP Terminator which they've been going at since late December, while 1<sup>st</sup> Platoon is furiously working to try and finish as much as they can on FOB Wolverine before the incoming unit arrives. Through all of the moving around and missions we are fully engaged in getting ready to come home and we couldn't be happier about it. Bravo Company is taking to re-deployment just as we've taken to all of our construction missions getting ready to send everybody home in just a few short weeks and the professionalism and work ethic of all of the Battledawg Soldiers continues to amaze me day in and day out. Until the last soldier gets on the plane to come home we will vigilantly continue to finish the mission we came here to do and return to Fort Sill knowing that we made a difference.

### First Sergeant

The final months remain for the Battledawgs; however, the amount of construction continues to grow to support the influx of troops. Whether it is a Forward Operating Base expansion or finishing up a new Combat Outpost the outstanding Soldiers of Bravo Company make it happen. Soon your loved ones will be reunited with you to build the foundation on the home front. Your support over the past year (plus) has led to their overall mission success.

### First Platoon

1<sup>st</sup> Platoon got the chance to catch up on some much needed rest and relaxation at Kandahar Air Field, while waiting to fly out to FOB Wolverine. Although we were delayed at Kandahar for two weeks, it gave the Soldiers the opportunity to watch the Super Bowl, play some football and basketball and visit the PX and bazaar on base. Immediately after landing here, the Soldiers began filling sand bag in order to provide overhead cover for the bunkers. We are working with 68<sup>th</sup> CSE to built FOB Wolverine from the ground up, which will eventually house over 1000 personnel. Our vertical mission will require us to construct 18 guard towers. Meanwhile, we are keeping busy here receiving our lumber and building materials until the perimeter walls are up and we can begin construction.

### Second Platoon

This month 2<sup>nd</sup> Platoon welcomed ILT Decker back to the "We All We Got" family after ILT Park took good care of them for the majority of the deployment. The platoon is currently improving COP Terminator by constructing six guard towers and three hard huts. The work is progressing nicely with six guard towers and one hard hut completed in less than a month. One squad recently returned to Maywand to start on the first of nine guard towers that have to be completed as well. The Soldiers manage to keep focused on the construction mission at hand despite all the redeployment preparations which are a constant reminder that it is nearly time to go home. The Soldiers of 2<sup>nd</sup> Platoon have made COP Terminator the premier example of a combat outpost in the RC South. They take pride in the work they do and all of their supporters at home should be just as proud of them as I am.

### Maintenance Platoon

Somebody found the switch and turned it on. Everybody's attitude has changed. All of a sudden it was like the switch was turned on and everyone's energy levels came back up and attitudes changed to a more *POSITIVE outlook*. Everyone is excited and you can sense it in the air. Our tour of duty is almost up! We have hit the last 60 day mark, in this deployment. Our conexes are getting packed and our equipment is getting inspected, cleaned, and reorganized. Each Soldier is waking up with a *POSITIVE Attitude!*

All of the loved ones back at home probably realize this as well and are getting just as excited, nervous, and anxious as we are. These next two months will go by and the next thing you know we will be standing in the Fort Sill gymnasium for our Welcome Home ceremony. What a stupendous day that will be!

### Earthmoving Platoon

The Earthmoving platoon has continued strong in the month of February. EM has shown no signs of calling it quits and has demonstrated this by completing a number of missions on FOB Maywand. EM has improved roads and drainage, as well as constructed new roads on FOB Maywand. This may not sound like an enormous undertaking but when you see how EM makes roads, you see the ground preparation, the water distribution, the spreading of the gravel, and the compaction, and you understand how difficult such a task can be. EM has continued to do this time and time again with speed and efficiency.

EM also completed the Phase III FOB Maywand expansion during the month of February. This included over 5,000 linear feet of HESCOs and the relocation/emplacement of two guard towers. This task was completed very quickly and safely by the platoon and EM demonstrated once again why Bravo Company is the best in the 62<sup>nd</sup> EN Battalion.

The month of February also saw the addition of a 100 meter by 100 meter small arms range on FOB Maywand. The range was completed in less than a week despite its size and the adverse weather. The range is by far one of the best in all of Afghanistan.

EM and the rest of the Soldiers from Bravo Company are motivated and looking forward to finishing up the last few months of this deployment, working hard and prepping things for the incoming unit and for redeployment. EM has continued to impress everyone at all the FOBs and COPs they've visited with their work ethic. EM is prepared to cross the finish line strong and on top and to return to Fort Sill proud and ready to spend time with family and friends. 13 months down, two to go! BATTLEDWGS!



SPC Horning and 1st Platoon Soldiers spreading gravel at FOB Maywand



SGT Walters helps ground guide a 916 moving a tower

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## Charlie Company “Cobras”

It has been another busy month for the Soldiers of Charlie Company. As we near the end of the deployment, the Cobras are not letting up. This month each platoon took on a new and challenging project and produced great results.

1<sup>st</sup> platoon began the construction of 12 B-huts, including two that will be converted into shower and latrine facilities, at COP Monti. Happy to be out of the snow at Altimur, they were slowed slightly by heavy rain, but are making great



**1st Platoon constructing the guard towers used to keep Soldiers on COP Penich safe inside the wire**

progress. The B-huts are a much needed improvement to a COP whose population has almost doubled in size. The platoon also had a squad working at COP Penich to build guard towers. The squad worked alongside EM platoon in the initial construction at COP Penich.

2<sup>nd</sup> Platoon completed the construction of five Hard Huts and three guard towers at COP Michigan. They were able to complete the Hard Huts in record time making some much needed

room for the Soldiers at COP Michigan. The platoon will only get a short break before heading out to COP Penich to get moving on the vertical construction on the COP. They have a big project ahead of them building 20 B-Huts, shower and latrines, and a company TOC which will keep them busy until it is time to head home.

EM Platoon is finishing up the ground work for COP Penich. They started with an empty field and transformed it in just a few weeks into a COP that is now home to an infantry company. They filled hundreds of meters of HESCOs and spread thousands of meters of gravel in no time, setting the stage for 2<sup>nd</sup> platoon's B-Hut construction. EM will move back to FOB Fenty just long enough to prepare for the next mission, expanding a small COP to house a company.



**EM Platoon grading the mountainous, rocky terrain to level the ground for further construction at COP Penich.**

As always the headquarters, maintenance and convoy team sections continue to work hard to ensure that the platoon's missions are a success. The convoy team continues to move Soldiers to their mission sites, and the maintenance section keeps them rolling. Supply has been busy sending out extra uniforms and new equipment. Headquarters has sent truck after truck of building materials to the job sites to keep the platoons building.

The Soldiers of Charlie Company will be working hard these last few months. Although they will be looking forward to heading home, there is a lot of work to be done here, and the Soldiers of Charlie Company will continue to make a significant impact in AO Duke.



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## 68<sup>th</sup> Combat Support Equipment “Trailblazers”

The month of March has definitely seen a drastic change across the company as we started construction operations in RC-South. After taking a short three day, 250km convoy we have positioned the company at FOB Wolverine and are well into construction. Hitting the ground, we immediately went blades down and began to push earth. Having been here for over two weeks, only now are our Trailblazers taking notice of the area. The temperature has been relatively cool with significantly strong winds during the late afternoon hours. Needless to say, the wind plus the constant pushing of earth has resulted in plenty of freshly covered dirt faces.

The main effort on ground has been our 2PLT and they have been anxious to push earth. Having spent several months on ECP guard at FOB Sharana they have been looking forward to this mission. Tasked with constructing the LSA, they definitely have their hands full as they are required to make cuts and fills that range up to eight feet in various areas. As the only construction element on ground for the first few weeks, they have definitely been busy as they emplaced over 4km of berm, 700m of IOB HESCO's and constructed a new ECP for the existing COP.



**2PLT Soldiers construct ECP**



**Company and BN surveyors support construction**

First Platoon Soldiers have focused their efforts on completing a Helipad and like 2PLT will be required to make significant cut and fills. Although early on they were scattered at FOB Orgun-E, FOB Salerno, FOB Sharana, Bagram and Kandahar they continued to make forward progress. With minimal personnel on ground, they maintained a can do attitude as they not only worked on their assigned mission but also provided support to other priority projects. With the entire platoon finally arriving at FOB Wolverine within the last week, they are looking forward to blazing the trail.

Much like 1PLT, our 3PLT and Maintenance PLT have been spread all throughout Afghanistan as they moved from FOB Orgun-E to FOB Wolverine. Although the movement has been slow, once on ground they will definitely contribute to the mission. However with the

Soldiers and NCOs available to support the company at Wolverine they have provided all the needed support no matter the task.

Overall FOB Wolverine has definitely been an experience. The scope of work is a challenge but the battalion has provided us the resources needed to be successful. In addition to providing equipment the unit has ensured that the trailblazers have hot showers, hot food and latrines. Although these amenities may seem basic, they definitely make the difference at the end of a 14 hour day. Mail on the other has been slow but parcels have started to arrive so please send your Soldier hygiene and other comfort items. However, I encourage you to use the standard boxes provided by the Post Office in order to maximize the number of packages delivered to the FOB. **Trailblazers!**



**SFC Parrish supervises construction**

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## Soldier Highlights

SPC Denton Lloyd is the Cobra of the Month for March. He is an outstanding member of the Earth Moving Platoon. During the recent mission to COP Penich, SPC Lloyd has distinguished himself from his peers in his leadership and accountability of 20 local national workers. He led his crew of villagers in the building the COP by standing up Hesco bastions, filling thousands of sandbags and emplacing them on guard towers and around the COP where needed. SPC Lloyd always has a great attitude in his daily work. The workers mimic the attitude of SPC Lloyd, always upbeat in their own hard work.

SPC Lloyd is a leader among his peers. He is always ready with a joke or a quick quip to bring a smile to the face of everyone in the platoon. He takes pride in himself and his equipment. His assigned 5-ton is always maintained with exacting care. He is a great motivator for the Soldiers of the platoon. SPC Lloyd is a great example of a Cobra who works hard, takes responsibility and has fun while doing it!



SPC Alain Colaire was born on the island of Guadalupe, an overseas region of France in the Eastern Caribbean Sea on March 28, 1977. He was raised in the Republic of Dominica, where he started his career in carpentry at 16 years old. He came to the United States on March 21, 1998. Never afforded the opportunity to go to high school in Dominica, he earned his GED through the Job Corps at Fort Devens, Massachusetts in 2001, and joined the US Army on 13 January 2004. Since enlisting in the Army, he has been stationed at Fort Hood, Texas and assigned to A Company, 62<sup>nd</sup> Engineer Battalion. He deployed with the battalion to Iraq in 2006, and is now serving with distinction in Afghanistan. His favorite mission this deployment has been the "L" shaped double SEAHUT headquarters building at FOB Airborne because it challenged him technically and the overall scale of the building was impressive.

He became a naturalized citizen of the United States of America in June 2005. He is married to Geraldine Durant of Dominica, and has two sons, Kaiden, two years old, and Alden two months old.



The Trailblazer team can push earth all day long but it is our surveyors that provide us the necessary information to ensure that we are successful. An integral member of our survey team is SPC Ramdeo Seemungal. Since arriving at FOB Wolverine, he and his fellow surveyors have worked to quickly site-in the project in order to ensure that the mission continuously moved forward.

SPC Seemungal is an asset to any team and never limits himself to his MOS. Whether doing general carpentry, drafting changes or emplacing elevation stakes, SPC Seemungal takes pride in the task at hand. Without his efforts and the dedication put forth by other Soldier's like him the 68<sup>th</sup> CSE would not be able to accomplish our mission.



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## Soldier Highlights

NCOs such as SSG Luke Kimberlin, have worked countless hours planning and preparing to execute any and all missions to the best of his ability. SSG “Kimbo”, as he’s referred to by the platoon, is always the first to respond with a, “Hooah!” when it’s time to take on a tough mission. He is eager to learn from his peers and the senior NCOs and plans on making the Army a career.

He joined the military in April 2004 and has advanced quickly in his five years in the Army due to his hard work, effort, and competence. He calls Grand Rapids, MI home and plans on attending the Basic NCO Academy upon return to the States and would like to then serve as a drill sergeant to train future Soldiers and prepare them for success in the Army.



The HSC Highlight Soldier of the Month is PFC McDaryon Jordan. PFC Jordan is proud to be a native of Baton Rouge, Louisiana. He is an outstanding member of the HSC supply team. He performs all of his MOS tasks quickly and efficiently. On any given day, PFC Jordan orders, picks up and processes orders of supplies critical to the company’s mission. He is also a very resourceful member of the Paleriders. PFC Jordan is a very reliable and trustworthy young Soldier. Because of his abilities and integrity, PFC Jordan is often entrusted to inventory and secure items that are critical to the battalion’s mission. He is also assigned with ordering and distributing uniform items for Soldiers through the Army Direct Ordering (ADO) system. Without question, PFC Jordan contributes greatly to the company mission and has a definitive role in helping maintain the positive morale of the entire company.



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## Chaplain's Corner

**Greetings All,**

March is well underway and we're having some pretty weather here at Sharana. I'm not sure there's much "Spring Fever" in the air though. It's still too much the "same ole - same ole" everyday routine. I've always heard "March winds bring April showers, and April showers bring May flowers" but most of us are just hoping "March winds" will blow us ever closer to home. For some of the 62<sup>nd</sup> Engineers however, March is bringing boxes of green clothing to wear for St. Patrick's Day. We're doing what we can to keep the spirits lifted each and every day. Focusing on the "little things" like never before helps bring a little cheer to all.

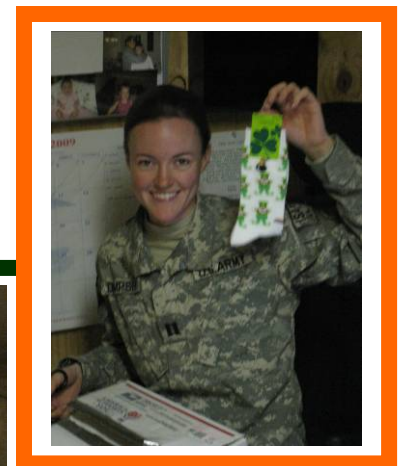
The big excitement here is the advancing redeployment of our Bravo and Charlie Companies. As they get ever closer to coming home we're all reminded that the rest of us will follow soon. We've heard that the 74<sup>th</sup> made it back home and we're seeing that Bravo Company is coming to the end of their deployment successfully as well. I think we're all getting a little excitement and hope from these things.

Until then, however I hope we're all prepared for the last leg of the journey. Things should be busy enough around here to keep our minds occupied. My concern is for you family members back home. I know many of you will be ending a school year with the kids pretty soon and schedules may change to meet new demands. Others of us are about to spend our second birthdays and anniversaries away from home. There are certainly a lot of things to get us discouraged if we let it. Take a lesson from LT Brian

Wilson and CPT Dempsey below and celebrate the little things too the fullest. And have a Happy St. Patrick's Day in the process!



Blessings, CH EEZ



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